

Satisfaction of Parents about the Provision of Special Education Facilities for Their Children with Cerebral Palsied

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Abstract

Education is obligatory part of children's socialization. Currently in Pakistan, parents are paying a great attention on the education of their children with special needs as it was neglected in past decades. The study was piloted to identify the parents' satisfaction regarding their children with special need's academic performance, available facilities at school campuses and in future, their expectations from their children with special needs. This study was conducted in special education institutions of district Faisalabad and in total, eighty five face to face parents' interviews were completed with the help of a well-structured questionnaire. Mostly respondent's children were studied at primary level. The majority of the respondents almost (94%) were satisfied with their children's academic performance and the facilities that were available at school campuses like: trained teachers, transport facilities (74%), caregivers while more than half of the parents were not satisfied with the provision of vocational trainings at school.

Keywords: Provision of Educational facilities, children with Special needs, Parents' satisfaction, Cerebral Palsy.

INTRODUCTION

Special education is the practice of educating students with special needs in a way that addresses their individual needs and differences. Children with Special needs face numerous problems like learning and communication problems, mental illness, developmental delay, allergies or terminal illness [17]. In their educational process they need additional educational services like Individual Education Plan (IEP)'s, modified curriculum, specifically adapted teaching area, a resource room, manageable environment, specialists, adapted equipment and materials, accessible settings [10]. Disabilities divide into four major categories i.e. physical disabilities, mental retardation, hearing impairment and visually impairment. Physical disability pertains to total or partial loss of a person's bodily functions (e.g. walking, gross motor skills, bladder control etc.) and total or partial loss of a part of the body (e.g. a person with an amputation). There are many types of physical disabilities like cerebral palsy, amputation, arthritis, multiple-sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, acquired spinal cord injury post-polio syndrome and spina bifida [13]. Cerebral palsy is characterized by motor impairment and can present with global physical and mental dysfunction, resulting from brain injury that occurs before cerebral development is complete [2].

The availability of physical facilities in a school has a significant impact on students' performance. Environment in which the pupils learn is very vital and without the suitable setting actual learning cannot take place. Children with visible physical disabilities assessed themselves more negatively than non disable peer. There different features need to refinement like socialization, self-concept, attitude, aptitudes and self- governing in their everyday lifecycle [7]. They also suffer in controlling and coordinating their movement so they require exercise and therapies along with their education. Parents also misjudge the skills of their child with special needs. The focus of this paper is physical disabilities especially cerebral palsy. Keeping in view the above problems, the focus of the present study was on parent's satisfaction about the provision of special education facilities for their children with cerebral palsy and their expectations from their children with special needs in future.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Various studies showed that children with visible physical disability assessed themselves more negatively than non-disabled children and cerebral palsy lied in visible physical disability. Ludwig [8] recognized that children with chronic motor disorders such as cerebral palsy had problems in controlling and coordinating their

physical movements. The goal of the conductive education (CE) was to help children with cerebral palsy to learn how to find ways to achieved personally formulated goals, independence and exercised one's own choices. Although in another study, Best [3] showed results on affective quality of school life for children with disability and he found that children with visible physical disability reacted more negatively as compare to non-disabled in areas of social competence, acceptance by others, school attitude and self-concept. This dynamic was more existed for regular students than the children who were attending special day class programs.

Leeper [7] claimed that the child learned through concrete rather than abstract experiences. Physical facilities assisted them in learning. Saeed [14] found in his research that availability of the physical facilities

comprising drinking water, electricity, boundary wall, toilets, furniture, playgrounds, libraries, transport and dispensaries had a significant positive effect on the performance of the students and their achievement. Both indoor and outdoor environments leave impact on children's learning. Whereas Bruce [4] stated that learning was not only varied because of climate, location, and situation, but also in terms of the program to be developed. Miller and Reid [10] stated that virtual reality applications had the potential of improving life skills, social participation, mobility, and cognitive abilities, while creating a motivating experience for children with disabilities [9]. Rosenbaum [14] concluded that it was important for educators and rehabilitation experts to thoroughly research the efficacy of complementary and alternative therapies before endorsing them. Complementary therapies had useful components for functioning children's self-esteem and promoting a sense of access and participation [8]. Government of Pakistan [6] focused on early intervention, assessment and medical treatment, education and training, integration and mainstreaming, vocational training, employment and rehabilitation, use of information technology, assistive technology on the basis of individual needs and outreach programs, advocacy and mass awareness, sports and recreation, design of buildings parks and public places, institutional arrangement and mechanism, funding and monitoring [5].

In different studies, researchers showed parents' intentions and satisfaction towards the education of their children with special needs. In a study, Newman [12] described that mostly parents were satisfied with their children's schooling. Special children's parents reported that they were at least somewhat satisfied with their children's schools. Nearly 9 out of 10 parents between 6 to 13 years old and 8 out of 10 parents of 13 to 17 years old were somewhat or very satisfied with their children's schools. Similar proportions were reported that they were satisfied with their children's overall education (90% and 86%) and with their children's teachers (90% and 86%). Although in another study, Vijesh [16] considered mothers' stress towards their children with multiple disability attending special schools in Kerala State, India. He defined that mostly mothers expressed negatively towards abilities of their special needs children like; their ability of achieving self-sufficiency was the most stress producing factor in the research.

METHODOLOGY

This study was designed to know the parents' satisfaction about the education of their children with special needs, offered services at school campus, and their upcoming hopes from their children. The study was conducted in special education centers of district Faisalabad. Statistics about special institutions in district Faisalabad were collected from District Education Officer (DEO) Faisalabad by the researcher personally. All parents of Cerebral Palsied (CP) children that were enrolled in special education centers of district Faisalabad were the population of this study. Five out of nine schools were selected through simple random sampling technique. Data was collected through a well-structured questionnaire that consisted of close ended questions. Parents were interviewed during Parents Teacher Meeting (PTM). There were 89 CP students enrolled in these five special schools, 85 parents were interviewed out of 89 to achieve the objective of the study whereas four parents were not available in meeting. The data were analyzed through descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions, percentages and cross-tabulation with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Education of children with special needs is not only depending on learning theory and arithmetic; they also need to polish their personality and daily living style and skills. Their education is not possible in normal schools; they need extra special facilities like specialists, special transport and transition facility, vocational training and many others. In this study, we focused on the views of parents about the availability of the educational facilities and their future expectation from their children with special needs.

Demographic characteristics

Table 1 shows the background information of children with special needs and their parents who were interviewed in the survey. 48% of fathers and 52% of mothers were interviewed and a huge majority (76%) of child with special needs was boys. 44% of the children were six to ten years old and 44.7% were between eleven to fifteen years old. Almost (39%) of parents had passed their secondary school examination. Almost 30% of the fathers had their income till 10,000 rupees and 34% had income between 10001 rupees to 15000 rupees. 14% had more than 15001 and less than 20,000 rupees monthly income. 35% of children with special needs were in play group while 48% were in primary school. Only one child was in middle school whose parents were interviewed. 15% were got admission in another program including cognitive skills, social skills, motor development and self-help skills.

Table 1 Background Information of Children and their Parents				
Demographic characteristics		Options	Percentage	Frequency
Relation with child	Mother	Father	41	48.2
			44	51.8
Gender of child	Girl	Boy	65	76.5
			20	23.5
Age of child	5 & below		11	12.9
			23	27.1
			38	44.7
			13	15.3
Education of respondents	Illiterate		11	12.9
			15	17.6
			13	15.3
			33	38.8
			13	15.3
Monthly income of father (in Rupees)	Below 5000		9	10.6
			17	20.0
			29	34.1
			12	14.1
			18	21.2
Class level of child	Play group		30	35.3
			41	48.2
			1	1.2
			13	15.3

Parents' Satisfaction with Offered Facilities for Children with Special needs at Schools Table 2 shows the satisfaction of parents regarding the available facilities at school campuses. 56% of the parents were satisfied with the availability of four and more special teaches at school. A significant number of parents (74%) said that transport facility was available for children's pick and drop and they were satisfied with this facility. 39% of parents reported that they were satisfied with the available vocational training at schools while 50% said that vocational training was not available at school and 4.7% said that they did not have knowledge about this. A little more than three fourths (76%) of parents said that primary education was available at school and they were satisfied while 17.6% said that other educational levels were available at school including cognitive skills, social skills, motor development and self-help skills. 13% of the respondents said that one caregiver was available for their children and 26% said that two caregivers were available while a little more than half (54%) said that three caregivers were available at school for taking care of their special children. 17% parents said that they were paying additional charges for the caregivers and they were satisfied with the performance of their children while 76% of parents said that they were not paying any additional charges for the caregivers at school although they were satisfied with the academic performance of their children. A very few number of parents were not satisfied with their children academic performance at school and they were only 3.6% of the entire data.

Table 2

Parents' Satisfaction with Offered Facilities for Children with Special needs at Schools

Offered facilities for children with special regarding their children's academic needs at schools	Indicators	Parents satisfaction		
		performance		No
		Yes	%	
Special teachers	One	17	20	1
	Two	15	17.6	2
	Four & Above	48	56.5	2
Transport for children's pick and drop	Yes	63	74.1	2
	No	17	20	3
Vocational training	Yes	33	38.8	1
	No	43	50.6	4
	Don't know	4	4.7	0
Level of education available at school	Primary	65	76.5	3
	Other	15	17.6	2
Caregivers at school	One	11	12.9	0
	Two	22	25.9	3
	Three	46	54.1	2
Additional payment for caregivers	Four	1	1.2	0
	Yes	15	17.6	2
	No	65	76.5	3

Parents' Future Expectations from their children with special needs

Table 3 shows parents' future expectation from their children with special need's keeping in view their performance at school. 63% of the parents were determined that their children will complete their education while 3.5% were not very hopeful with the future education of their children. Almost (52%) parents were satisfied with their children education and they said that their special children were making progress in their school. 6% of parents said that their children were not progressing in their studies and 4.7% said that they don't know that their children were making progress or not. Almost 32% of the parents said that at some extend their children were making progress and they were satisfied with their performance. 34% of parents were hopeful that their children will be able to earn in future while 16.5% parents said that their special children will not be able to earn in future. 43.5% were uncertain regarding their children's future earning as they were not sure and they choose the option that they did not know about this.

Table 3

Parents' Future Expectations from their Children with Special needs

Parents future expectations satisfaction regarding their children's	Indicators	Parents			
		Academic performance			
		Yes	No		
Will the child complete education?	Yes	F	%	F	
	No	54	63.5	3	
	Don't know	5	5.9	0	
Did your child make progress?	Yes	21	24.7	2	
	No	44	51.8	1	
	Don't know	5	5.9	2	
Will your child be able to earn in future?	Yes	4	4.7	2	
	No	27	31.8	0	
	Don't know	29	34.1	2	
	Yes	14	16.5	0	
	No	37	43.5	3	

The results of present study shows that 60% parents are not agreed at the provision of vocational training these results support the study of Ali[1] that the vocational training centers are not properly equipped to provide vocational training, which can provide a job to students after completion of training.

DISCUSSION

The study was designed to analyze the satisfaction of children with special need's parents regarding their children's school performance and offered facilities in school. The education of special needs children was ignored in past but presently government school as well as parents were also paying attention to their education.

The study found that more enrolled students in special education institutions were boys and they were in primary level as well as in play group also. The results shows that almost 94% of the parents were satisfied at the provision of specialists and 74% were agreed at the availability of transport facilities for their children in special education centers of district Faisalabad. These results supported the outcomes of Rosenbaum [14] that it was important for educators and rehabilitation experts to thoroughly research the efficiency of complementary and alternative therapies. Complimentary therapies might be not effecting permanent change but had useful components for function, children's self-esteem and promoting a sense of access and participation. They were agreed that caregivers were available at school and almost 60% said that vocational trainings were not available at schools. These findings clearly supports few of the terms of National Policy for Persons with Disabilities that was presented in 2002 including medical treatment, education and training and vocational training, design of buildings parks and public places and institutional arrangement [5]. The huge majority of the parents were satisfied with the academic performance of children with special needs These results were supported by the study of Newman [12] who stated that mostly parents were satisfied or at least somewhat satisfied with their children's schooling. The parents were hopeful about their children with special need's future and they showed positive response on their ability of learning. Although in another study in Kerala, India, Vijesh [16] found mothers' stress towards their children with multiple disability attending special schools. He defined that mostly mothers expressed negative response towards their special child's abilities to learn self-sufficiency. The results were different because in present study, the unit of analysis was only cerebral palsy children while Vijesh [16] worked on children with multiple disabilities. It is suggested that the number of special educators and specialists should be increased in special education centers. Schools must focus on the development of skills of cerebral palsied children, modified curriculum and IEP must be provided to all cerebral palsied children in all schools subjects and transport facilities should also be ensured from home gate. Vocational training should be given priority because it can be useful in future.

CONCLUSION

The concluded observations of the study are given below:

1. Parents of cerebral palsied children have the knowledge of basic education. However, they are not well educated. Majority of the cerebral palsied children's parents belong to normal income category.
2. Parents are not discriminating their children with special needs from their normal children. They observe their children with special need's academic performance and plan for their future.
3. All special schools have attendant for the care of children with cerebral palsied in district Faisalabad. Parents are not paying any additional charges for the provision of attendant at schools.
4. The provision of education for children with cerebral palsy in district Faisalabad is satisfactory while the provision of vocational training requires improvements to become up to optimal level. The special schools provide good service of transportation for CP children.
5. Transport facilities are also available but further improvement is needed in this sector.

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